Production of 8.2 million is 25 pct. below 1979

Year's car output lowest since 1961

By Patricia Hoffman
Staff Writer

U. S. auto production for 1980 is estimated as the lowest for the year since 1961 although the projected December output is up slightly from the same month last year.

Planned output for the year is 6,246,749, down 25.79 percent from the 8,418,369 built last year and the lowest since the 5,522,004 built in 1961.

The projected December output is 464,345, up 2.12 percent from the 454,669 assembled the same month last year.

Even though the December total is up somewhat from last year's projected fourth-quarter bullet of 1,682,992 is down 9.80 percent from the 1979 fourth-quarter output of 1,865,858.

Breakdown for the year is: General Motors, 64.10 percent; Ford, 20.31 percent; Chrysler, 9.85 percent; American Motors, 2.63 percent; Volkswagen of America, 3.07 percent; and Checker Motor, 0.04 percent.

Due to the shortened holiday week last week, planned output of 47,283 was down 60.88 percent from the previous week's 120,871. Due to holiday closing of the assembly plants on Dec. 22 last year, there were no comparable 1979 figures.

The auto makers closed six assembly plants early for the holidays. Checker Motors, Ford San Jose and Chrysler Newark and Jefferson all closed Dec. 12. Chrysler's Belvidere plant went down Dec. 1, and GM's Wilmington point closed Dec. 19.

Chrysler will extend downtime at its Lynch Road point until Jan. 26 and at its St. Louis point until Jan. 19. All other Chrysler points will be down until Jan. 12. Volkswagen of America will also be extending downtime until Jan. 12.

Chrysler reportedly plans to cut production of the K-car when operations resume at its Newark and Jefferson points Jan. 12. Total production of the K-car will be cut 21 percent. The Jefferson plant will reduce production from 1,120 to 800 daily, and Newark will cut its output of 1,120 to 960.

No Saturday overtime was scheduled last week due to the holiday.

All plants are down until after the Christmas holidays. Most will reopen Jan. 5.

breaking news

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Ford to redesign T-Bird for '83

DEARBORN.—Ford Motor Co., in an effort to reverse slumping sales of its sporty Thunderbird and Cougar XR-7 intermediates, plans to completely restyle the cars for the '83 model year. T-Bird and XR-7 were downsized and redesigned just a year ago, but sales have tailed off drastically since then. The cars will stay rear-drive in '83; new front-drive replacements for the mid-size models aren't due until 1986-87.

VW to shut down to trim inventory

DETROIT.—Volkswagen of America will shut down production at its Westmoreland (Pa.) assembly plant and its South Charleston (W. Va.) stamping plant for an additional week after the Christmas break, the first such production cut to control inventories of new cars since VWoA began operations in the U. S. in 1978.

Japan tops U. S. in 1980 vehicle output

DETROIT.—Japan took over first place in motor-vehicle production for 1980 with the U. S. falling to second. Japan won by a wide margin. The Japan Automobile Manufacturers Assn. estimated that Japanese makers built about 11 million cars, trucks and buses for the year. The U. S. total was about 8 million.

Standard & Poor's cuts Chrysler bond rating

NEW YORK.—Chrysler Corp.'s financial crisis has caused Standard & Poor's Corp. to lower its rating on Chrysler debentures to triple-C, its second lowest rating. It is the second time this year that S&P has lowered Chrysler's rating.

TRUCK PRODUCTION IN U. S.†

	Week Ended Dec. 27, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended Dec. 29, 1980	Dec. Est.	Jan. 1, to Dec. 29, 1979	Jan. 1, to Dec. 27, 1980
CHEVROLET	5,385	.....	14,285	53,668	.....	481,132
DODGE/PLYMOUTH	472*	.....	1,795	5,696	.....	115,582
FORD	6,394*	.....	15,985*	44,097	.....	585,218*
GMC	1,705	.....	4,958	16,184	.....	154,935
INTERNATIONAL	562*	.....	1,406*	5,451	.....	65,159
MACK	180*	.....	658	1,519	.....	22,796
JEEP	788*	.....	1,970*	6,238	.....	80,619*
AMC CORP.	36*	.....	90*	296	.....	8,082*
VOLKSWAGEN	130	.....	789	2,414	.....	27,481
MISCELLANEOUS	200*	.....	625	2,050	.....	36,975
Total Trucks, U. S.	15,852	.....	42,561	137,613	.....	1,577,979

CANADIAN TRUCK PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Dec. 27, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended Dec. 29, 1980	Dec. Est.	Jan. 1, to Dec. 29, 1979	Jan. 1, to Dec. 27, 1980
CHRYSLER CORP.	640	.....	1,717	5,564	.....	51,286
FORD MOTOR	1,728	.....	4,259	14,194	.....	176,989
GENERAL MOTORS	2,620	.....	6,845	23,220	.....	241,869
AMERICAN MOTORS	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	18,127
INTERNATIONAL	118	.....	300	952	.....	15,745
MACK	10*	.....	56	168	.....	2,077
Total Trucks, Canada.	5,116	.....	13,177	44,098	.....	506,093
N. American Trucks	20,968	.....	55,738	181,711	.....	2,084,072

†—Now includes window van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial vehicles only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.

Truck production for year dips to lowest since 1964

U. S. truck production for 1980 is estimated as the lowest since 1964, and planned output for December is the lowest since 1963.

Truck output for 1980 is estimated at 1,577,979, down 46.93 percent from the 2,973,498 assembled in 1979. In 1964, domestic truck makers built 1,559,515 units.

The planned December output is 137,613, down 6.56 percent from the 147,289 assembled in 1979. In 1963, the makers built 123,965 trucks.

Last week's scheduled truck output was 15,852 units, a 62.75 percent drop from the previous week's 42,561 because of the shortened holiday week. There were no comparable 1979 figures for last week due to the Dec. 22 plant closings last year.

Fourth-quarter domestic truck output is projected at 462,867, down 17.37 percent from the 560,143 units assembled in the comparable quarter last year.

Chrysler's Warren truck point, down as scheduled for the holidays, will resume operations Jan. 5, but will close for the week of Jan. 12 and will reopen Jan. 19.

No overtime was slated last week due to the holiday.

Auto production in Canada falls to 13-year low

Canadian auto production for 1980 is the lowest since 1967, and December is estimated to be slightly above the same month last year.

The 1980 planned output for cars was 830,624, down 12.09 percent from the 944,933 assembled in 1979. In 1967, the makers produced 714,084 units.

The December estimate of 59,510 is up 1.48 percent from the 58,640 assembled last year.

Canadian truck production for 1980 fell considerably below last year's output and was the lowest for the year since 1976.

The estimated 1980 output of trucks was 506,093, down 23.02 percent from the 657,436 assembled in 1979. In 1976, truck output was 497,430.

The projected December total for this year is 44,098, a 9.95 percent increase from the 40,104 assembled the same month last year.

Last week's scheduled auto production was 6,394 units, down 63.37 percent from the 17,458 assembled the previous week because of the shortened holiday week.

Truck production last week was estimated at 5,116, a 61.17 percent drop from the 13,177 built the previous week also due to the shortened week.

Downtime will be extended after the holidays at two Chrysler plants. Chrysler's Windsor car plant will remain down until Jan. 19, and Chrysler's Pillette Rd. (truck) point will resume operations Jan. 12.

There was no overtime slated last week due to the holidays.

U. S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Dec. 27, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended Dec. 29, 1980	Dec. Est.	Jan. 1, to Dec. 29, 1979	Jan. 1, to Dec. 27, 1980
AMERICAN MOTORS	1,473*	.....	3,275*	11,298*	.....	164,361*
Eagle	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Concord	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
AMX	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pacer	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Spirit	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
CHRYSLER CORP.	1,224*	.....	3,720	31,682	.....	615,465
Plymouth Total	73*	.....	378	13,399	.....	281,354
Horizon	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	141,735
Volare	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	51,735
Gran Fury	29*	.....	237	266	.....	14,335
Caravelle	44*	.....	141	477	.....	6,179
Reliant	.....	.....	.....	12,656	.....	67,370
Chrysler Total	797*	.....	2,527	6,148	.....	80,872
Chrysler	190*	.....	1,127	1,317	.....	19,638
LeBaron	607*	.....	1,400	4,831	.....	61,234
Imperial	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Dodge Total	354*	.....	815	12,135	.....	253,239
Omni	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	118,933
St. Regis	63*	.....	236	299	.....	13,163
Diplomat	291*	.....	579	2,061	.....	30,050
Aspen	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	36,881
Aries	.....	.....	.....	9,775	.....	54,212
FORD MOTOR	11,354*	.....	29,374*	101,438*	.....	1,268,934
Ford Division	7,494*	.....	19,675*	68,122*	.....	902,244*
Pinto	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	68,179
Must./Must. II	.....	.....	.....	6,493*	.....	219,867*
Fairmont	1,010*	.....	2,525*	8,901*	.....	196,506*
Granada	1,854*	.....	5,565*	8,908*	.....	107,697
LTD II	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Thunderbird	626*	.....	1,569*	8,873*	.....	116,203*
Ford	806*	.....	2,018*	6,210*	.....	90,208*
Escort	3,198*	.....	7,998*	28,737*	.....	103,584*
L-M Division	3,860*	.....	9,699*	33,316*	.....	366,690*
Mercury Total	3,112*	.....	7,829*	27,408*	.....	314,637*
Bobcat	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	12,445*
Capri	.....	.....	.....	2,294*	.....	64,319*
Zephyr	496*	.....	1,240*	3,954*	.....	65,969*
Cougar/Monarch	98*	.....	294*	923*	.....	22,348*
XR-7	854*	.....	2,135*	5,415*	.....	58,824*
Mercury	526*	.....	1,315*	4,473*	.....	54,737*
Lynx	1,138*	.....	2,845*	10,349*	.....	35,995*
Lincoln Total	748*	.....	1,870*	5,908*	.....	52,053*
Lincoln	386*	.....	965*	2,996*	.....	22,501*
Versailles	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,866*
Mark VI	362*	.....	905*	2,912*	.....	27,686*
GENERAL MOTORS	32,322	.....	79,804	305,027	.....	4,002,974
Buick Division	6,537	.....	17,165	61,903	.....	763,955
Skyhawk	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Skylark	1,599	.....	4,520	16,321	.....	213,040
Century	1,271	.....	3,130	11,619	.....	161,853
Regal	1,905	.....	4,829	16,917	.....	200,418
Buick	1,352	.....	3,404	12,941	.....	145,172
Riviera	410	.....	1,282	4,105	.....	43,472
Cadillac Division	2,396	.....	6,284	19,778	.....	199,082
Seville	208	.....	741	2,838	.....	33,674
Cadillac	1,686	.....	4,047	12,644	.....	112,421
Eldorado	502	.....	1,496	4,296	.....	52,987
Chevrolet Division	11,860	.....	30,246	121,476	.....	1,716,094
Chevette	1,420	.....	3,528	25,332	.....	443,764
Monza ('80)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	147,768
Camaro	945	.....	2,343	7,974	.....	115,755
Citation	3,430	.....	9,224	33,641	.....	448,516
Malibu	2,435	.....	6,180	22,567	.....	264,412
Monte Carlo	1,390	.....	3,356	12,463	.....	122,000
Chevrolet	1,920	.....	4,817	16,395	.....	130,695
Corvette	320	.....	800	3,104	.....	43,184
Oldsmobile Division	7,564	.....	18,164	71,362	.....	761,421
Starfire	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Omega	971	.....	2,803	9,708	.....	110,456
Cutlass	4,149	.....	9,007	37,844	.....	385,022
Oldsmobile	2,092	.....	5,244	20,300	.....	228,022
Toronado	352	.....	1,110	3,510	.....	37,921
Pontiac Division	3,965	.....	7,943	30,508	.....	562,422
Acadian†	50	.....	150	600	.....	18,520
Sunbird ('80)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	145,628
Phoenix	965	.....	2,734	9,797	.....	133,343
Firebird	688	.....	1,621	5,737	.....	77,907
LeMans	600	.....	642	4,372	.....	62,296
Grand Prix	1,544	.....	2,348	8,438	.....	74,698
Pontiac	118	.....	448	1,564	.....	50,030
VOLKSWAGEN	910	.....	4,698	14,725	.....	191,954
CHECKER	.....	.....	.....	175	.....	3,061
Total Cars, U. S.	47,283	.....	120,871	464,345	.....	6,246,749

CANADIAN CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Dec. 27, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended Dec. 29, 1980	Dec. Est.	Jan. 1, to Dec. 29, 1979	Jan. 1, to Dec. 27, 1980
AMERICAN MOTORS	.....	.....	583	1,673	.....	3,092
CHRYSLER CORP.	720	.....	1,798	2,518	.....	70,032
FORD MOTOR	560	.....	1,463	9,248	.....	243,507
GENERAL MOTORS	5,024	.....	13,389	45,329	.....	504,106
VOLVO	90	.....	225	742	.....	9,887
Total Cars, Canada	6,394	.....	17,458	59,510	.....	830,624
N. American Cars	74,283	.....	120,871	500,003	.....	7,053,521
N. American Trucks	20,968	.....	55,738	181,711	.....	2,084,072
North America Cars and Trucks	68,251	.....	176,609	681,714	.....	9,137,593

†—All Acadians and Caravelles are built for sale in canada. *—Estimated.